

If by [kramer53](#)

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Death, Guilt, Regret, nancy thinks about barb

Language: English

Characters: Barbara "Barb" Holland, Dustin Henderson, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Steve Harrington, Will Byers

Status: Completed

Published: 2016-12-31

Updated: 2016-12-31

Packaged: 2022-04-02 00:20:32

Rating: General Audiences

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 385

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Barbara was dead. Will was alive.

And there was nothing she could do about it.

Nothing.

If

Author's Note:

I wrote this a while ago and never planned to post it, but... oh well... here it is.

Dustin, Lucas, and Mike all crowded around Will's bedside, arms jerking animatedly and voices rising above one another as they fought to describe the last week to their rescued friend.

Arms crossed, hands gripping her biceps tightly, Nancy watched them from the doorway. Her slender fingers curled through the holes of her sweater, tearing puffs of the fabric out with uncut, dirty nails.

Will was back.

It echoed around in her head, cracking against her skull with no way to escape.

Will was back.

Will was *alive*.

A small smile flickered across her thin lips, but was gone as quickly as it came. Nancy's throat constricted, and her eyes began to sting. She took a hitched breath, wiping away tears before they could fall.

Sure, Will was back, but Barb—

Nancy shoved a hand against her mouth to prevent the sob that rose up from deep within her from tumbling out.

Her brother was happy. He was alive, and so was Will. So was Lucas and Dustin and Steve and Jonathan. That was all that mattered.

No, she silently seethed. *It's not*.

Everyone in the town looked for Will. Everyone *cared* about him. It was always: “We’ve got to save Will!” Never: “We’ve got to save Barbara!”

Never.

And now, she was dead. Barb was dead, and Will was lying in that bed where she should've been instead, alive and well. *Barb should've been alive* .

But she wasn't.

And it was all Nancy's fault.

If she hadn't forced Barb to go to that party. If she hadn't told her to

leave just so Nancy could have some time alone with Steve. If she hadn't taken so long to notice her *best friend* was missing. If she hadn't kept quiet about it because Steve was scared. If she hadn't followed Steve and his stupid friends and his stupid face and his stupid hair and his stupid *everything* .

If, if, *if*, *if*, ***if***, ***IF*** —

Then Barbara would still be alive.

Nancy glanced once more at the four boys. Smiles on all their faces. Happiness. Relief. Love.

She growled—something from the back of her throat—and turned, stalking out of the door, barely walking straight through her blurry, tear soaked, vision.

Barbara was dead. Will was alive.

And there was nothing she could do about it.

Nothing.